

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 259773

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: AORG, ILO

SUBJECT: ILO MEMBERSHIP: TUNISIA'S INITIATIVE

1. ASSISTANT SECRETARY C. WILLIAM MAYNES CALLED EGYPTIAN MINISTER MOHAMED I. SHAKER TO THE DEPARTMENT SATURDAY MORNING TO CLARIFY APPARENT CONFUSION IN OUR COMMUNICATION WITH EGYPT REGARDING EGYPTIAN COOPERATION WITH A TUNISIAN INITIATIVE TO ACHIEVE RECONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE ILO'S COMMITTEE ON APPLICATION OF CONVENTIONS AND RECOMMENDATION WHICH FAILED TO BE ADOPTED BY THE JUNE 1977 ILO CONFERENCE FOR LACK OF A QUORUM. TUNISIAN INITIATIVE ENVISIONED JOINT EGYPTIAN-TUNISIAN EFFORT TO PERSUADE ILO GOVERNING BODY AT ITS NOVEMBER MEETING TO PLACE RECONSIDERATION OF THE 1977 REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE
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ON APPLICATION OF CONVENTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE AGENDA OF THE 1978 ILO CONFERENCE. GOVERNMENT OF EGYPT RESPONSE HAD RAISED PROBLEM OF POSSIBLE INTERPRETATION OF ARAB ACCEPTANCE OF THE 1977 REPORT AS ACQUIESCENCE TO ISRAELI SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES. MAYNES REITERATED ARGUMENTS MADE IN STATE 257909 AND 258656 AND GAVE SHAKER THE FOLLOWING TALKING POINTS TO ASSIST HIM

IN COMMUNICATING THE CLARIFICATION OF THE U.S. POSITION
TO CAIRO.

2. TALKING POINTS ON THE REPORT OF THE ILO COMMITTEE ON
APPLICATION OF CONVENTIONS AND RECOMMENDATION: TREATMENT
OF TERRITORIES OCCUPIED BY ISRAEL.

-- THE ARAB STATES HAVE IN THE PAST, NOTABLY 1973 AND
1974, MAINTAINED THAT ISRAEL, AS A PARTY TO CERTAIN ILO
CONVENTIONS, WAS LEGALLY OBLIGED TO APPLY THOSE CONVEN-
TIONS IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES. IT WOULD THEREFORE
BE INCONSISTENT TO MAINTAIN THAT A RESPONSE BY ISRAEL ON
THE EXTENT TO WHICH IT IS APPLYING THESE CONVENTIONS IN
THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES CONSTITUTES AN EXPRESS OR
INFERENTIAL RECOGNITION OF ISRAELI SOVEREIGNTY THERE.

-- UNDER ARAB SPONSORSHIP THE ILO GENERAL CONFERENCE OF
1974 TO ADOPT A RESOLUTION QUOTE CONCERNING THE POLICY OF
DISCRIMINATION, RACISM, AND VIOLATION OF TRADE UNION FREE-
DOMS AND RIGHTS PRACTISED BY THE ISRAELI AUTHORITIES IN
PALESTINE AND IN OTHER OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES UNQUOTE
CONTAINING THE FOLLOWING PARAGRAPHS:

QUOTE RECALLING THE ADOPTION BY THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR
CONFERENCE OF FREEDOM AND ASSOCIATION AND PROTECTION OF
THE RIGHT TO ORGANISE CONVENTION, 1948 (NO. 87) AND
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OF THE DISCRIMINATION (EMPLOYMENT AND OCCUPATION) CONVEN-
TION, 1958 (NO. 1111),

QUOTE EMPHASIZING THAT THE ISRAELI AUTHORITIES HAVE
RATIFIED THOSE CONVENTIONS,

QUOTE CONSIDERING THE RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE INTERNA-
TIONAL LABOUR CONFERENCE AT RECENT SESSIONS CONCERNING
THE RACIAL DISCRIMINATION BEING SUFFERED BY THE INDIGENOUS
POPULATIONS OF SOUTH AFRICA, GUINEA-BISSAU AND OTHER
AFRICAN TERRITORIES SUBJECT TO A COLONIAL REGIME OR
FOREIGN DOMINATION, IN WHICH THE WORKERS' CONDITIONS OF
LIFE AND WORK ARE SIMILAR TO THOSE OF THE ARAB WORKING
PEOPLES UNDER ISRAELI OCCUPATION,

QUOTE SERIOUSLY CONCERNED AT THE CONTINUING VIOLATION, BY
THE ISRAELI AUTHORITIES OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND WORKERS'
RIGHTS IN THE OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES, AND DEEPLY DIS-
TURBED AT THE DANGEROUS CONSEQUENCES OF THIS VIOLATION;

CONDEMNS THE POLICY OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION AND VIOLATION
OF TRADE UNION FREEDOMS, IMPAIRING BASIC HUMAN FREEDOMS,

WHICH THE ISRAELI AUTHORITIES ARE PURSUING AGAINST THE
ARAB PEOPLES. UNQUOTE

THUS THE ARAB POSITION HAS BEEN THAT ISRAEL IS BOUND
TO APPLY THESE CONVENTIONS, AND HAS VIOLATED THEM.
AGAIN, IT IS NOT CONSISTENT TO CONTEND THAT ISRAELI
AFFIRMATION OF THE APPLICATION OF THESE VERY CONVENTIONS
CONSTITUTES ANY MEASURE OF RECOGNITION OF THE OCCUPIED
TERRITORIES AS SOVEREIGN TERRITORY OF ISRAEL.

-- THE SOVIET BLOC OPPOSED ADOPTION OF THE REPORT FOR ITS
OWN PARTISAN REASONS. IT WAS THE SOVIET DELEGATION THAT
CONTRIVED THESPURIOUS THEORY THAT ACCEPTANCE OF THE
REPORT IMPLIED ACCEPTANCE OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES AS
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BEING UNDER ISRAELI SOVEREIGNTY. WE BELIEVE THE SOVIET
BLOC MISLED OTHER DELEGATIONS.

-- IN OUR VIEW, THE JUNE 1977 ACTION BY THE CONFERENCE
WAS THE RESULT OF A SERIOUS MISUNDERSTANDING ON THE PART
OF ALL STATES INVOLVED. FOR THE SAKE OF THE ILO'S
FUTURE, WE HOPE THE JUNE 1977 ACTION CAN BE CORRECTED AND
THAT EGYPT CAN HELP IN THIS EFFORT. VANCE

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